

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are all the claims pending in the present application, new claim 3 having been added, as indicated herein. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claims 1 and 2 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Erk et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,483,066).

§ 112, Second Paragraph, Rejections - Claims 1 and 2

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the present Office Action. Claims 1 and 2 are amended, as indicated herein, and Applicant believes that these amendments obviate the § 112, second paragraph, rejections.

§ 102(b) Rejections (Erk) - Claims 1 and 2

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected for the reasons set forth on page 3 of the present Office Action. In response, Applicant submits the following.

The vacuum switch, according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, is configured as set forth above with respect to claim 1, whereby, in the three-phase vacuum switch of the claimed invention, electrostatic focusing between radiators of the three phases is relieved at least because a cover is provided for at least one the radiators, and therefore electric discharge is less likely to occur. Consequently, the claimed arrangement makes it possible to reduce an air clearance between the radiators, thereby enabling one to downsize the three-phase vacuum switch.

On the other hand, in Erk, there is disclosed a vacuum switch which does NOT cover at least one of the claimed radiators such that electrostatic focusing between radiators is reduced

and the end part of all fin-shaped protrusions (refer to Figure 2, top) . In addition, the arrangement of Erk does not result in the relieving of electrostatic focusing and a reduction of air clearance between radiators in the three phases.

Therefore, at least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that amended claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over Erk. Claim 2 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from independent claim 1.

Finally, Applicant adds new claim 3 to provide a varying scope of coverage. Applicant submits that this new claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from independent claim 1.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

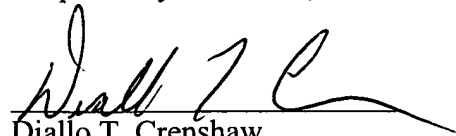
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